

REMARKS

Claims 3, 6, 7, 9 - 14, 24, 26, 27 and 28 are now in the case. Of these, Claims 24, 27 and 28 are independent claims. Claims 3, 6, 7, 9 - 14 and 26 depend either mediately or immediately from Claim 24.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication by the Examiner that Claim 4 was directed to allowable subject matter. New Claim 28 is a rewriting of Claim 4 in independent form, Claim 28 also incorporating the limitations of Claim 24 as presented in the Amendment dated November 6, 2006. Claim 4 has been canceled.

Claim 24 has been amended and is directed to a specific unique combination of structural elements which cooperate in a unique manner not taught or suggested by the art of record, including Kohno et al. and Grein et al.

Claim 24 is directed to apparatus for connection to a flat panel TV screen to improve the appearance thereof and to facilitate operation of audio and video functions related to said flat panel TV screen.

The apparatus recited in Claim 24 includes a frame having a frame top, a frame bottom and frame sides defining an opening larger than the size of the screen viewing area of a flat panel TV screen and a mat having a fixed rectangular configuration releasably attached to the frame.

The mat extends inwardly from the frame top, frame bottom and frame sides along the entire combined lengths thereof into the frame opening. The recited mat is formed of material allowing passage therethrough of wireless control transmissions and has a mat opening smaller than the frame opening.

The apparatus set forth in Claim 24 also includes connector structure for connecting the releasably attached frame and mat to the flat panel TV screen. The mat, when the releasably attached frame and mat are connected to the flat panel TV screen by the connector structure, being maintained in a fixed position and immovable relative to the frame and viewing area, extending from the frame toward the screen viewing area and completely surrounding the screen viewing area. The mat is sized and configured to allow viewing of the screen viewing area through the frame opening and through the mat opening.

It is further recited that the releasably attached frame and mat are cooperable to substantially cover the housing and substantially shield the housing from view by a person observing the screen viewing area while allowing control of audio and video functions by wireless control transmissions through said apparatus.

The structural elements and cooperative relationships existing therebetween as set forth in Claim 24 (which facilitates and allows actual use and control of the TV while providing a

pleasing aesthetic appearance) is not taught or suggested by newly cited Kohno et al., Grein et al. or any of the other art of record.

An important aspect of applicant's invention resides in the ability of the apparatus to readily adapt to and be used with flat panel TV screens of different sizes. This is due to the fact that the mat and frame of applicant's apparatus are releasably attached, this is, separate and separable structural components. One of the advantages of this arrangement is that a single sized frame may be used in conjunction with different mats, e.g. mats with different mat top, bottom and side lengths and widths to adapt the structure to flat panel TV screens with different sized housings and viewing areas. Flat panel TV screens come in many different heights and widths, with the housings and viewing areas also differing in heights and widths.

The frame is now defined in Claim 24 as having a frame top, a frame bottom and frame sides defining the frame opening. The mat now specifically recited in the claim has a fixed rectangular configuration and extends inwardly from the frame top, the frame bottom and the frame sides along the entire combined lengths thereof into the frame opening. The apparatus is readily adapted to different sizes and models of flat panel TV screens. Utilizing the teachings of applicant's invention, a frame size may be chosen to completely surround a maximum size

screen, with the mat being chosen or selected to "fill in" the space between the outer edge of the screen housing and the viewing area of the screen at the top, bottom and sides. Applicant's invention readily allows viewing of the viewing area. The mat is claimed as being maintained in a fixed position and immovable relative to the frame and screen viewing area and completely surrounding the screen viewing area.

Also important is the recitation that the mat is formed of material allowing passage therethrough of wireless control transmissions. Thus, as also set forth in Claim 24, the releasably attached frame and mat not only are cooperable to substantially cover the housing and shield it from view but they allow control of audio and video functions by wireless control transmissions through the apparatus. Applicant's claimed invention therefore allows and facilitates full use and control of audio and video functions while improving the appearance of the TV outside the viewing area thereof.

Kohno et al. does not teach or even remotely suggest the structural elements and cooperative relationships set forth in Claim 24 as currently amended. Kohno et al. is simply another type of screen cover, devices generally well known in the prior art. Kohno et al. differs from other types of screen covers by virtue of the fact that rollers of the Kohno et al. device can be utilized to move an endless cover sheet which incorporates two

openings, the openings located in front and back segments of the cover. Rotation of the rolls is utilized to change overlap of the two windows or openings to change the transverse width W that may be viewed through overlapped portions of the two windows.

This arrangement is completely different than that of applicant as set forth in Claim 24 (currently amended). Applicant's claimed apparatus includes a frame having a frame top, a frame bottom and frame sides defining a frame opening larger than the size of the screen viewing area of the flat panel TV screen, the apparatus also including a mat having a fixed rectangular configuration releasably attached to the frame extending inwardly from the frame top, frame bottom and frame sides along the entire combined lengths thereof.

The claim further states that the mat when the releasably attached mat and frame are connected to the flat panel TV screen is maintained in a fixed position and immovable relative to the frame and viewing area, extends from the frame toward the screen viewing area and completely surrounds the screen viewing area. These features are important since it allows use of mats with different top, bottom and side dimensions to adapt the structure to flat panel TV screens with different sized housings and viewing areas, as stated above. The Kohno et al. arrangement merely provides an approach to adjusting to different aspect ratios at the left and right sides. There is no

suggestion whatsoever of filling in or changing the screening or blocking function at the top or bottom nor of an arrangement allowing different mats with different top, bottom and side lengths and widths to adapt the structure to flat panel TV screens with different sized housings and viewing areas.

Kohno et al. does not provide any teaching whatsoever that the opening and closing device and movable screen cover in any way permit passage therethrough of wireless control transmissions allowing control of audio and visual functions while the Kohno et al. device is in place. The screen of Kohno et al. merely conforms to the shape of and alternatively completely covers or adjustably uncovers ends of the screen. It is not associated with any controls of the video display.

Grein et al. fails to remedy the deficiencies of Kohno et al. as a reference. Grein et al. discloses a "virtual reality portrait" system wherein a wide variety of components may be associated with a flat video screen to perform a variety of functions through the use of electronic transmissions from a transmitter that may be located remote from the screen. The signal transmitter can provide signals to multiple remotely located LCD screens and the image and sound can be controlled from a central location. There is no suggestion in Grein et al. of the use of a mat of the type set forth in Claim 24 (currently amended) being formed of material allowing passage therethrough

of wireless control transmissions or of the releasably attached frame and mat being cooperable to substantially cover the housing and substantially shield the housing from view by a person observing the screen viewing area while allowing control of audio and video functions by wireless control transmissions through the apparatus.

Grein et al. includes a vague general suggestion that decorative changeable frames may be included to allow the VR portrait display screen to be adapted to various decors. There is no suggestion whatsoever of the frame/mat combination set forth specifically in Claim 24 nor is there any suggestion of the cooperative relationships existing between such structural elements.

Claim 3 depends directly from Claim 24, Claim 3 reciting certain details regarding the connector structure. Neither Kohno et al. nor Grein et al. provide any suggestion of this feature when incorporated in the novel overall combination of Claim 24.

Claim 7 also depends from Claim 24 and recites that the apparatus includes an electronic component receptacle on the frame and defining a receptacle interior for receiving at least one electronic component operatively associated with the flat panel screen operable by wireless control transmissions from a control external of the apparatus, the electronic component

receptacle being disposed behind the frame and substantially hidden from view by a person positioned in front of the flat panel TV screen.

There is no suggestion whatsoever of this feature in the art of record, including Kohno et al. and Grein et al.

Claims 9 - 14 depend mediately or immediately from Claim 7, the latter depending from Claim 24. Claims 9 - 14 recite features relating to the electronic component receptacle and its relationship to the rest of the apparatus. There is no teaching or suggestion whatsoever in the art of record of the structure of Claims 9 - 14 nor of the structure set forth in Claim 24 and intermediate Claim 7, as discussed above.

Claim 26 depends from Claim 24 and recites that the apparatus additionally comprises mat attachment structure for releasably attaching the mat to the frame whereby the mat may be removed from the frame and replaced by a substitute mat. Claim 26 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kohno et al. in view of Grein et al. and further in view of Lin. The patent to Lin fails to remedy the deficiencies of Kohno et al. and Grein et al. as references.

Lin does not teach or even remotely suggest the structure incorporated in Claim 26 which is part of a novel overall combination as set forth in Claim 24. The "frame" of Lin supports a shade or blind which covers the entire viewing area

when completely unrolled. When partially unrolled it blocks out a portion of the viewing area and any display thereon. There is no mat associated with the frame. The frame of Lin is sized for a particular size and shape of video display. There is no teaching or suggestion in Lin that the frame thereof (or for that matter the shade or blind associated therewith) in any way permits passage therethrough of wireless control transmissions allowing control of audio and visual functions while the Lin device is in place. The shade or blind of Lin merely conforms to the shape of and alternatively completely covers and uncovers the screen. It is not associated with any controls of the video display whether up or down. There is no suggestion that the frame can be utilized for this purpose either. The comments above with respect to Claim 26 are also applicable to Claim 6 which depends from Claim 26 and states that the mat attachment structure maintains the mat in a substantially planar condition.

Claim 27 has been substantially amended and recites apparatus for releasable connection to a flat panel TV screen to improve the appearance thereof and to facilitate operation of audio and video functions related to the flat panel TV screen. The claim states that the apparatus includes a frame completely surrounding the screen viewing area of the flat panel TV screen when the frame is connected to the flat panel TV screen.

The recited apparatus also includes a wireless receiver located in the frame for receiving wireless transmissions transmitted toward the frame from a transmitter external of the frame operatively associated with audio/video equipment external of the frame and receiving electronic signals from the audio/video equipment.

It is also recited that the receiver is hidden from view by an observer of the flat panel TV screen and operatively associated with the flat panel TV screen when the apparatus is connected to the flat panel TV screen for inputting the electronic signals into the flat panel TV screen.

Claim 27 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grein et al. The Grein et al. device or system has been described above. While Grein et al. makes a vague suggestion that the system may include the use of decorative frames, there is no teaching whatsoever of a wireless receiver located in the frame for receiving wireless transmissions directed toward the frame from a transmitter external of the frame operatively associated with audio/video equipment external of the frame and receiving electronic signals from the audio/video equipment; nor is there any suggestion in Grein et al. of the receiver located in the frame being hidden from view by an observer of the flat panel TV screen and operatively associated with the flat panel TV screen when the

apparatus is connected to the flat panel TV screen for inputting the electronic signals into the flat panel TV screen.

In summary, it is believed that all claims now under consideration in the case clearly patentably define over the art of record, whether taken alone or in combination. Allowance of this application is believed to be in order and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas R. Lampe', is written over a horizontal line.

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